

Gramor Development ready to bring grocery store to downtown Vancouver

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A rendering of Gramor Development's proposed mixed-use development at Block 10. The dream of a full-service grocery store in downtown Vancouver may soon become reality.

On Monday, Gramor Development Inc. announced it is in advanced talks with the City of Vancouver to transform Block 10 – the last vacant block in downtown, located on 8th and Washington streets – into a mixed-use development featuring six stories of apartments and a street-level grocery store.

In total, Gramor’s proposal would bring 250 new apartment units to downtown, in addition to a 30,000-square-foot grocery store, street-front retail and 277 spaces of underground and above ground parking.

“Block 10 is an ideal location for a grocery store development,” said Barry Cain, president of Gramor Development – the same firm that’s leading the nearby Waterfront Vancouver development project. “Currently, there is no supermarket in Vancouver’s city center and with the strong demand that exists today along with the unprecedented growth to come over the next three to five years, filling this gap will have an increasingly positive impact on the community for years to come.”



In its proposal, Gramor Development envisions a U-shaped building constructed with energy conservation measures meeting or exceeding those of the Green Globes sustainability program criteria.

During a workshop Monday evening, the Vancouver City Council agreed to move forward with the Gramor plan, so long as the developer can guarantee a grocery store will be part of the project.

“That property (Block 10) is too prime to let sit even longer than it has already been sitting there,” said City Councilmember Bart Hanson during the workshop. “This is an exciting opportunity and I would definitely like to see it move forward.”

An alternate proposal for Block 10 – from LSW Architects for an urban arts and innovation elementary school – was also considered, but because the council favored Gramor’s proposal, city councilmembers recommended finding another location for the school.

For years, City officials have wanted to sell Block 10 to a private developer for multi-story mixed-use development. The Vancouver City Center Vision and Subarea Plan, developed in 2007, envisions housing or offices with a mix of active services on the first floor, such as restaurants, coffee shops, brew pubs, a grocery store or other retail.

“We have needed a downtown grocery store for a long time and I’m excited that we may now have the ability to meet that need,” said City Councilmember Jack Burkman.

“Vancouver’s downtown is vibrant and continuing to grow!”

Gramor Development has a history of working with established grocers; the company said 25 of the 65 projects it has brought to the metro area are anchored by grocery stores. Gramor’s most recent development, Happy Valley Crossroads in Happy Valley, Ore., is anchored by Fred Meyer. The company has also worked with New Seasons Market and Safeway, among others.

If Gramor’s proposal is approved, construction is expected to begin in the second quarter of 2018.

Update: This story has been updated to reflect the Vancouver City Council’s Monday night decision to move forward on the project.